

**David Barrow from Thomas Jefferson, May 1, 1815 ,  
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Leicester Ford.**

**TO DAVID BARROW J. MSS.**

Monticello, May 1, 1815.

Sir, —I have duly received your favor of March 20th, and am truly thankful for the favorable sentiments expressed in it towards myself. If, in the course of my life, it has been in any degree useful to the cause of humanity, the fact itself bears its full reward. The particular subject of the pamphlet you enclosed me was one of early and tender consideration with me, and had I continued in the councils of my own State, it should never have been out of sight. The only practicable plan I could ever devise is stated under the 14th quære of the *Notes on Virginia*, and it is still the one most sound in my judgment. Unhappily it is a case for which both parties require long and difficult preparation. The mind of the master is to be apprized by reflection, and strengthened by the energies of conscience, against the obstacles of self interest to an acquiescence in the rights of others; that of the slave is to be prepared by instruction and habit for self government, and for the honest pursuits of industry and social duty. Both of these courses of preparation require time, and the former must precede the latter. Some progress is sensibly made in it; yet not so much as I had hoped and expected. But it will yield in time to temperate and steady pursuit, to the enlargement of the human mind, and its advancement in science. We are not in a world ungoverned by the laws and the power of a superior agent. Our efforts are in his hand, and directed by it; and he will give them their effect in his own time. Where the disease is most deeply seated, there it will be slowest in eradication. In the northern States it was merely

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superficial, and easily corrected. In the southern it is incorporated with the whole system, and requires time, patience, and perseverance in the curative process. That it may finally be effected, and its progress hastened, will be the last and fondest prayer of him who now salutes you with respect and consideration.